

# SB 1291 (EVANS)

## TEACHER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACT

### THE GOAL

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To allow unemployed teachers to be eligible for unemployment insurance while taking certification training needed to teach vacancies in math, science and special education.

### BACKGROUND

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According to the California Teachers Association, fiscal conditions have required school districts across the state to dismiss 11,848 certified teachers in the year 2011. Worse this year, nearly 20,000 pink slips were issued. Since August 2006, one and a half million Californians have lost their jobs and the unemployment rate has skyrocketed from 4.9% to 12.2%.

Overall, fewer people are enrolling in teacher preparation programs resulting in fewer individuals graduating with teaching credentials in hard to fill vacancies in math, science and special education. From 2001-2002 through 2006-2007, the number of enrollees in teacher preparation programs declined by one-third, from more than 77,000 to less than 52,000.

According to a 2007 study conducted by The Center For the Future of Teaching and Learning and the California Council on Science and Technology, California will need over **33,000 new science and math teachers** in the next decade due to attrition and retirement.

To put the shortage in perspective, even if every single student who graduates this year with a math or science degree decided to teach school in one of those subject areas instead of pursuing other professions, California would still not meet the challenging demand for math and science teachers in the next decade.

California should be taking the necessary steps to retrain more teachers in math, science and special education. This action would reduce the number of unemployed teachers while providing highly trained qualified professionals to teach students in our classrooms.

Many unemployed teachers are eager to acquire certification training and intensive test preparation in math, science, or special education, but cannot do so without the risk of losing their benefits under the current restrictions of the California Unemployment Insurance Code.

### THIS BILL

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SB 1291 (Evans) would make a minor change in the California unemployment insurance code to enable unemployed teachers to receive benefits while attending certification training and intensive test preparation to fill hard to staff teaching vacancies in math, science and special education.

### SUPPORT

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California Teachers' Association

### OPPOSITION

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None.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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